Claims

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for stabilizing a ladder on a ground surface comprising:

a first plate adapted to be secured to a leg of the ladder;

a second plate having a top surface and a bottom surface, the second plate pivotally connected to the first plate and pivotal between a retracted position where the second plate does not substantially contact the ground surface and a stabilizing position where the bottom surface of the second plate is in contact with the ground surface;

a member having a proximal end pivotally connected to the first plate and a distal end, the member pivotal between a substantially upright position and a support position where the distal end of the member is in contact with the top of the surface of the second plate when the second plate is in the stabilizing position.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the distal end of the member comprises a rubber stop for contacting the top surface of the second plate when the member is in the support position and the second plate is in the stabilizing position.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second plate is sized to increase both width and length of a base perimeter formed by the legs of the ladder when the second plate is in the stabilizing position.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first plate comprises mounting brackets extending outward from the first plate for pivotally connecting the proximal end of the member.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first plate is rigidly secured to the leg of the ladder by a plurality of bolts.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the member pivots between the substantially upright position and the support position about a first axis, and the second plate pivots

between the retracted position and the stabilizing position about a second axis, the first and second axis being substantially parallel.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein when the second plate is in the stabilizing position, the second plate is substantially horizontal and flush with a bottom surface of the leg of the ladder.

8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the member is less than 12 inches in length.

9. A stepladder having high stability comprising:

a plurality of legs in contact with a ground surface; and

a stabilizing assembly having a first plate secured to an outer surface of at least one of the legs, a second plate having a top surface and a bottom surface, the second plate pivotally connected to the first plate and pivotal between a retracted position where the second plate does not substantially contact the ground surface and a stabilizing position where the bottom surface of the second plate is in contact with the ground surface; a member having a proximal end pivotally connected to the first plate and a distal end, the member pivotal between a substantially upright position and a support position where the distal end of the member is in contact with the top of the surface of the second plate when the second plate is in the stabilizing position.

10. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the distal end of the member comprises a rubber stop for contacting the top surface of the second plate when the member is in the support position and the second plate is in the stabilizing position.

11. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the number of legs is four, the four legs forming a base perimeter having a length and width, the second plate sized to increase both the width and length of the base perimeter when in the stabilizing position.

12. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the first plate comprises mounting brackets extending outward from the first plate for pivotally connecting the proximal end of the member.

13. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the first plate is rigidly secured to the outer surface of the leg of the ladder by a plurality of bolts.

14. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the member pivots between the substantially upright position and the support position about a first axis, and the second plate pivots between the retracted position and the stabilizing position about a second axis, the first and second axis being substantially parallel.

15. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein when the second plate is in the stabilizing position, the second plate is substantially horizontal and flush with a bottom surface of the leg of the ladder to which the first plate is secured.

16. The stepladder of claim 9 comprising two front legs and two rear legs, each of the two rear legs having the stabilizing assembly secured thereto.

17. The stepladder of claim 9 wherein the member is less than 12 inches in length.

18. A stepladder having high stability comprising:

a plurality of legs in contact with a ground surface; and

a stabilizing assembly secured to an outer surface of at least one of the legs, the stabilizing assembly comprising a base plate having a top surface and a bottom surface, the base plate pivotally connected to the outer surface of the leg and pivotal between a retracted position where the base plate does not substantially contact the ground surface and a stabilizing position where the bottom surface of the base plate is in contact with the ground surface; a member having a proximal end pivotally connected to the outer surface of the leg at a position higher than the base plate and a distal end, the member pivotal between a substantially upright position and a support position where the distal end of the member is in contact with the top of the surface of the base plate when the base plate is in the stabilizing position.

19. The stepladder of claim 18 wherein the distal end of the member comprises a rubber stop for contacting the top surface of the base plate when the member is in the support position and the base plate is in the stabilizing position.

20. The stepladder of claim 18 wherein the number of legs is four, the four legs forming a base perimeter having a length and width, the base plate sized to increase both the width and length of the base perimeter when in the stabilizing position.

21. The stepladder of claim 18 wherein the member pivots between the substantially upright position and the support position about a first axis, and the base plate pivots between the retracted position and the stabilizing position about a second axis, the first and second axis being substantially parallel.

22. The stepladder of claim 18 wherein when the base plate is in the stabilizing position, the second plate is substantially horizontal and is substantially flush with a bottom surface of the leg of the ladder.

23. The stepladder of claim 18 comprising two front legs and two rear legs, each of the two rear legs having the stabilizing assembly secured thereto.

24. The step ladder of claim 18 wherein the member is less than 12 inches in length.